



"2001: Montana Tourism Odyssey" Conference

The 2001 Governor's Conference on Tourism and Recreation is ready for its March 26-27, 2001, run at Helena's Best Western Colonial Hotel. If you haven't registered yet, the "early bird" registration fee of \$120 is available through March 8. From March 9-19, the registration fee is \$140 and it increases to \$160 after that. To register, contact RMS Management Services, 406-443-1160, e-mail: skopec@rmsmanagement.com.

Nationally recognized economist Dr. Joel Prakken opens the conference on Monday, March 26, with a look at the future for the world's tourism and travel. Other Monday highlights include:

- Bill Geist, ZEITGEIST Consulting of Madison, Wisconsin, helping us turn changes and trends into successful tourism operations.
- Becky Anderson, director of the successful rural, cultural tourism initiative, HandMade In America, sharing with us ideas of how to apply this concept to Montana.
- Glacier National Park Superintendent Suzanne Lewis joining Yellowstone Park's Chief of Compliance John Sacklin in a presentation on changes underway in our national parks.

On Monday, we'll also get updates on Montana's tourism and travel trends, inter-

national market opportunities, Travel Montana's web services and an entertaining Lewis and Clark showcase presentation.

Monday night, 6 p.m.-9 p.m., the Montana Historical Society and Montana Tourism Coalition will host the "Montana's Past - Tourism's Future" Reception & Auction at the Society's Helena headquarters, 225 North Roberts. Refreshments, entertainment, tours and an auction benefiting the Montana Tourism Coalition will be offered.

On Tuesday, the conference opens with a panel presentation providing different perspectives of how to "revive" Montana's economy and tourism's role in that effort. The panel includes Carol Donaldson, First Interstate Bank System-Billings; Evan Barrett, Butte Economic Development; Rosalie Sheehy Cates, Montana Community Development Corp, Missoula; Dave Bayless, Bayless & Associates, Inc., Bozeman; and Richard Barrett, UM Economics Department, Missoula. Other Tuesday highlights include:

- Popular TIA Learning Workshop Series presenter Jerold Kappel, Development Director for the American Association of Museums, talking about how to create the

"attraction" experience in our tourism operations.

- New York Times Pacific Northwest correspondent Tim Egan joining with two Montana travel journalists to discuss how to capitalize on what Montana has to offer.

- Representatives from the Montana Tribal Tourism Alliance sharing details of the visitor opportunities in Montana's Indian Country.

- Six Montana-based website design and marketing companies sharing tips and strategies on being effective through the Internet.

Other Tuesday sessions will focus on the master plan for Montana's Lewis & Clark Bicentennial activities, an update on the Montana Legislature and a photographic tour of Montana. Tuesday night will feature not only a visit with Governor Judy Martz, but with a President. Governor Martz will present the Tourism Person and Tourism Community of the Year Awards. Following the awards, the President will join us. More details on this later.

The Governor's Conference agenda, registration form, exhibitor/sponsor details, Helena lodging and more information is available on Travel Montana's Intranet site: travelmontana.state.mt.us/conference.

News You Can Use

- "Connecting Communities With Trails" is the theme of the 2001 Montana State Trails Conference that will be held in the Sheraton Billings Hotel in Billings on April 5-7, 2001. The purpose of the conference is to bring people together who are interested or involved in developing trails and greenways, and promoting bicycle/pedestrian opportunities in their communities. The registration form and agenda can be found on the Fish, Wildlife & Parks webpage at www.fwp@state.mt.us or you can receive additional information by contacting Bob Walker at 406-444-4585, bwalker@state.mt.us or Steve Gilbert at 406-444-7642, sgilbert@state.mt.us
- The U.S. Consul General in Calgary is holding an American Travel Marketplace from July 5-8, 2001. Over 90,000 consumers will be on hand. For more details contact Sharon Atkins at 403-265-2116 or sharon.atkins@mail.doc.gov
- Don't forget to visit Travel Montana's Intranet site at www.travelmontana.state.mt.us for the most current tourism-related legislation.

Guides for all Occasions

The 2001-2002 Travel Planner, Vacation Guide, Montana Highway Map and Calendar of Events are ready for spring distribution. All of our printed publications have been redesigned, and feature new images throughout. These guides serve as a vehicle to complement the promotional materials produced by our state's six tourism regions. If you are interested in receiving any of these guides, contact Travel Montana at 406-444-2654.

On-Line with Our Visitors

Travel Montana's website visitmt.com continues to surge in popularity. With over 2 million user sessions recorded in 2000, our site has become the main source of travel information for consumers as well as the most cost-effective marketing tool to promote the state. To capitalize on these findings, our consumer marketing department will increase its Internet presence. This effort will be accomplished through banner ads, purchasing specific words on various search engines and sending targeted e-mails to consumers that are interested in receiving travel-oriented information.

New to this year's Warm Season Campaign is a database e-mail campaign. Travel Montana has collected an extensive database of e-mail addresses from our Call Center, guest book entries, sweepstakes and promotions. We will use these addresses to develop a relationship via e-mail with our web users. Once interest is established, a quarterly e-mail will be sent to those web users who wish to receive travel updates and information about the state. As the campaign develops, additional addresses will be added to our database and we will target newsletters that cater to specific travel interests.

Travel Montana will also conduct an Internet Conversion Study on visitmt.com. This effort will help us better understand the travel behavior of our visitmt.com user. Results from the study will be available in late fall.

Webdate

Travel Montana's electronic media staff have been busy creating and developing some

new and improved features on the visitmt.com website for 2001. For example:

- The Lewis and Clark site, www.lewisandclark.state.mt.us, has gotten a facelift as well as some new feature pieces. These features include streaming video from the Ken Burns film "Lewis & Clark: The Journey of the Corps of Discovery," a complete travel planner that highlights lodging and other historical attractions along the trail, and postcards from various Lewis and Clark historic sites.

- "Beyond the Fires." This new feature located on the main site will provide information on post-fire regeneration and regrowth in our state's forests, offer fire-related travel opportunities and links to other fire pages.

- A special feature is being created to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Archie Bray Foundation for the Ceramic Arts in Helena. The site will highlight the center and the activities surrounding its June 2001 celebration.

Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Grants

The Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commission and its partners TAC/Travel Montana and the Montana Department of Transportation are offering a second round of grants to qualified non-profit organizations undertaking Lewis and Clark-related projects in preparation for the 200-year anniversary of the Lewis & Clark Expedition through Montana. For an application call the Commission's office at 406-443-2109, visit www.montanalewisandclark.org or contact your regional Lewis and Clark commission. Deadline for submitting grant applications is April 13, 2001.

Take Our Lead

Group and Overseas Marketing Manager Pam Gosink recently attended the American Bus Association convention in Baltimore. Pam reports that this convention was a successful group tour marketing effort. She had 29 appointments. Leads from the convention can be found on our Intranet site at <http://travelmontana.state.mt.us/OURPROGRAMS/abaleads.htm>, pam@visitmt.com or call Pam at 406-444-2654.

Goodbye and Good luck

Travel Montana says goodbye to longtime administrative assistant Joanne Gilbert. After eight years with Travel Montana, Joanne has accepted a new challenge with the Department of Commerce's Community Development Block Program. Travel Montana welcomes Daniel Bethke to the Electronic Marketing Department. Thank you Joanne and good luck Daniel.

*Alternative accessible formats of this document
will be provided to disabled persons on request.*

Calendar of Events

March

- 21-23 RMI Round Up, Sun Valley, Idaho
- 21-25 "Charlie Russell" Fam Tour - Russell/Gold West Country
- 21-25 North American Sports Journalists Association Meeting, Big Sky
- 22-28 "Ski and Winter Fam" - Glacier Country
- 26-27 Governor's Conference on Tourism & Recreation, Helena

*For all of the latest Montana tourism industry
information log on to Travel Montana's Intranet site:
travelmontana.state.mt.us.*



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